St Benedict's Catholic College

Anti-cyberbullying policy

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Approved by Governors	
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Contents

1. Introduction

The college recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in students' lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the college community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside college. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Participants can remain anonymous and explicit or other compromising photographs or video clips can quickly be circulated and hate campaigns can be devised within a short space of time

The effect on the victim can be devastating particularly if the bullying takes place when they are alone and feeling vulnerable. Victims need to be encouraged to have the confidence to come forward and report the situation. To this end all staff, particularly tutors, need to be alert for any signs that these activities are taking place and should report overheard conversations, for example.

The Education Act 2011 outlines that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Principal, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:
- Students, staff and parents are educated to understand what cyberbullying is and what its consequences can be
- Knowledge, policies and procedures are in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying in college or within the college community
- We have effective measures to deal effectively with cases of cyberbullying
- We monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures

3. What is cyberbullying?
- Cyberbullying is the use of ICT, commonly but not exclusively a mobile phone or the internet, deliberately to upset someone else
- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying
- It can go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people
- It can take place across age groups and college staff and other adults can be targeted
- It can draw bystanders into being accessories
- It includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or `cyberstalking': vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images and manipulation

4. Preventing cyberbullying
Understanding and discussion
- The Assistant Principal (Safeguarding) is responsible for overseeing the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and for monitoring its effectiveness
- Staff receive training in identifying cyberbullying and understanding their responsibilities
- All staff will be informed about the technologies that children are currently using and supported with keeping up-to-date with this
- Students are central in terms of shaping and communicating the policy to their peers throughout the college

- Students will be educated about cyberbullying through a variety of means: official social media accounts, assemblies, online awareness day, Anti-bullying Week, curriculum projects (Computing, PSHE, Drama, English), etc
- Parents are provided with information and advice on cyberbullying via the college website, printed literature, talks, etc
- Parents/carers and students will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Policy before students are allowed to use the internet in college
- Students, staff and parents will be asked to complete surveys to help evaluate and improve our policies and procedures

5. Policies and practices – we will:
- Ensure regular review and update of existing policies to include cyberbullying where appropriate
- Provide opportunities for policies to be addressed and for students to be involved in the process of updating and improving them
- Keep good records of all cyberbullying incidents
- Keep policies under review as technologies develop
- Publicise rules and consequences effectively

6. Promoting the positive use of technology – we will:
- Make positive use of technology across the curriculum
- Use CPD opportunities to help staff develop their practice creatively and support students in safe and responsible use
- Explore ways of using technology to support assertiveness, self-esteem and to develop friendships
- Ensure all staff and students understand the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts

7. Making reporting easier – we will:
- Ensure staff can recognise non-verbal bullying and the indications of cyberbullying
- Publicise and promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgment
- Publicise to all members of the college community the ways in which cyberbullying can be reported
- Provide information for 'bystanders' including reassurances about protection from becoming victims themselves
- Provide information on external report routes, e.g. mobile phone company, internet service provider, Childline

8. Responding to cyberbullying
Most cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the college's existing anti-bullying policy and behaviour for learning policy. Some features of cyberbullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:
- Impact: The scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying
- Targets and perpetrators: The people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets
- Location: The 24/7 and "anywhere" nature of cyberbullying
- Anonymity: The person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them
- Motivation: Some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- Evidence: Unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence
- It is possible that a member of staff and other adults may be a victim and these responses apply to them too

9. Support for the person being bullied
- Offer emotional support; reassure them that they have done the right thing in seeking support
- Advise the student not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to their parents/carers or a member of staff
- Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain
- Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change, e.g. mobile phone number

- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down
- Confiscate mobile phone from perpetrator, ask student to delete the offending content and communicate who they have sent it on to so it can be followed up
- Contact the police in cases of actual / suspected illegal content
  In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying them from their sites and services

10. Investigation
- Staff and students will be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screen-grab of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages
- If images are involved, the college will determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If so, we will contact the Children and Families Hub and Essex police
- Identify the bully
- Any allegations against staff should be handled as other allegations following guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education or the Staff Disciplinary Policy

11. Working with the bully and applying consequences
The aim of the consequences will be:
- To help the victim feel safe and be assured that the bullying will stop
- To hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour
- To demonstrate to the college community that cyberbullying is unacceptable and that the college has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly
- Consequences for any breaches of policies or internet / mobile phone agreements will be applied
- In applying consequences, consideration must be given to type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation
- The outcome will include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing the support to enable them to change their attitude and behaviour

12. Interventions
The college has a responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking the pastoral team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (BCCS)

13. Evaluating the effectiveness of prevention measures – we will:
- Use the Student Council to hear the students' point of view
- Identify areas for improvement and incorporate students' ideas
- Conduct an annual evaluation including a review of recorded cyberbullying incidents, a survey of student and staff experiences and a parent satisfaction survey
- Publicise evaluation findings; celebrate what works and what improvements are planned with all relevant stakeholders

14. Legal duties and powers
The college has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment
- The Principal has the power 'to such extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of students when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff (Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- College staff may request a student to reveal a message or other phone content and may confiscate a phone
- Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including; Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Malicious Communications 1988 and The Education Act 2011

15. Useful websites for information on Cyber-bullying

- Thinkuknow: Resources provided by Child Exploitations and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers
- Digizen provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people
- Childnet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves
- Advice on child internet safety from the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
- No Health Without Mental Health: Implementation Framework (2012)